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AUTHOR	Reed, Douglas S.
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ABSTRACT

This book examines the consequences of efforts to use state constitutional provisions to reduce resource segregation in U.S. schools, describing opposition to these decisions. It compares the relative success of school finance lawsuits to the project of school desegregation, exploring how race and class present sharply different obstacles to courts. Since a 1973 Supreme Court decision that deferred to the states regarding educational equality, one-third of state judiciaries have mandated reform of state-level educational funding systems. Part one, "Race, Class, and Educational Opportunity," includes (1) "Courts and Educational Opportunity: The Movement from Race to Class"; (2) "The Judicial Impact on School Finance Reform"; and (3) "Race, Class, and the Limits of Justice." Part two, "The Constitutional Ordering of Educational Opportunity," includes (4) "How Does a Constitution Mean? Constitutional Ordering and the Lessons of Educational Opportunity"; (5) "A Bounded Ambition: The Judicial Ordering of Educational Opportunity"; (6) "The Public's Opinion: Understanding Public Commitments toward Educational Opportunity"; (7) "Regimes of Inequality: The Organization of Educational Politics"; and (8) "Conclusion: Constituting Education in America." (Contains 245 references.) (SM)

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